

1992

TRIBUTE TO "JESSE" JAMES
LEIJA

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a San Antonio hometown hero.

The "sweet science," as the sport of boxing has been called, has provided an arena for epic battles that have produced larger than life prize-fight champions who have, throughout the sport's history, captivated the national attention.

Marciano, Ali, Leonard, De La Hoya—all of them are synonymous with boxing and all are well-known champions. However, for every prize-fighter who captured a title and the national spotlight, there is one whose career has not received the attention and accolades it truly deserves.

"Jesse" James Leija of San Antonio is one of those champions, and his career and commitment to succeeding deserves to be commemorated.

Best known to fans of the sport. "Jesse" James' intense talent in the ring resulted in some of the best boxing matches in recent history. And in a sport that has seen it's share of controversial personas, "Jesse" James always maintained a dignity and respect for his opponent, the sport and the fans.

While many boxing careers last only a few years, "Jesse" James' recently announced that he is retiring after an astonishing seven-teen years in the ring.

The sport will undoubtedly miss him.

"Jesse" James had a truly impressive career. Having faced and overcome seemingly insurmountable odds on his way to achieving great success, the story of "Jesse" James Leija is one that can inspire anyone, in or out of the ring.

Born and raised on the South Side of San Antonio, James is a proud graduate of Harlandale High School where being told he was too small to play football drove him in the direction of an even more challenging sport—boxing.

His parents, including his former pro-fighter father, would not allow him to box until he graduated from high school. So compared to most aspiring boxers, James got a late start first entering the ring at the age of 22. He quickly won his first fifteen fights and ultimately compiled an impressive 23 win and 5 loss amateur record. He won a San Antonio Golden Gloves title, won the 1988 Western Olympic Trials and competed in the 1988 Olympic Trials.

In 1994, Leija became only the third San Antonio boxer to win a world title when he defeated the legendary Ghana warrior and Hall of Famer, Azumah Nelson, for the WBC World Super Featherweight Championship.

"Jesse" James ultimately fought in nine world championship fights winning the IBA World Lightweight Championship, the NABF Featherweight Championship, and on two separate occasions, the NABF Lightweight Cham-
pionship.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

After 17 years, Leija ended his professional career of 57 matches with a record of 47 wins, including 19 by knock-out, 7 losses, 2 draws, and 1 no-contest.

All this despite having been told early on that he was too small and not strong enough to be a success in the ring.

As impressive and admirable as his career was, James' dedication to his community is even more so. He founded the "Jesse" James Leija Youth Foundation, and has long supported the Boys' and Girls' Club of San Antonio and the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Boxing Program. He has also supported numerous education programs, including a child daycare center to allow teenage mothers to complete their education.

Beyond being a great boxer, "Jesse" James Leija has been a truly great citizen, and we in San Antonio are lucky to have him.

To the people of San Antonio "Jesse" James Leija is always a winner and he will forever be their Champion.

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW KEENAN

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young man whose life was cut tragically short. Andrew Keenan, a resident of Ness City, Kansas, a former intern in my congressional office and a law student at the University of Kansas, passed away on January 31, at the age of 26, following a protracted battle with brain cancer. I would like to express my profound sorrow at the death of Andrew Keenan and offer my deepest sympathies to his fiancée, Erica Brown, his family, and friends.

Andy was a man of exemplary character, a character demonstrated by his religious faith, his determination to succeed, and his uncommon courage in the face of hardship and illness. He was also a man of great industriousness, ambition, and amiability, qualities which made him respected and well-liked by everyone who knew him. While interning in my Washington, DC, office, he assisted my legislative director with issues involving financial services, taxation and telecommunications.

Andy was also possessed a great sense of empathy and the heart of a true humanitarian. His efforts to aid the unfortunate took many forms, including the creation of a Web site dedicated to raising money for cancer research, providing food and clothing to a young girl in the Philippines through an adoption program, and, recently, donating money to victims of the tsunami. The fact that he always felt compassion for people who were suffering, even while suffering himself, is a testament to the kind of benevolent and caring of person he was.

As University of Kansas law professor Mike Hoefflich wrote recently in the Lawrence Journal-World, "For almost two years now, Andy has fought and fought and fought. He has re-

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fused to give up. In spite of his illness, his pain, his constant treatments, he has maintained his courage and his determination." I believe that this quotation exemplifies how the enduring strength and bravery of Andrew Keenan serves as an inspiration to all of us who were touched by his life, and encourages us all to lead a more thoughtful, more courageous existence.

MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT
CRIMES REVISION ACT OF 2005

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I introduced H.R. 664, the Military Sexual Assault Crimes Revision Act of 2005. This bill would repeal Article 120 of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and replace it with an improved sexual abuse statute patterned on 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241–2247. I introduced an identical bill last year, H.R. 4709, which was offered during mark-up of the defense authorization bill.

Although the legislation was not included in the final authorizing bill last year, a provision was included requiring the Secretary of Defense to provide the House and Senate Armed Services Committee, by March 1, 2005, a proposal for changes regarding sexual offenses in the UCMJ and the rationale for the changes. The language also "strongly encourages DoD to closely align the UCMJ's language on sexual assault law with the appropriate section of the federal criminal code." I am reintroducing this legislation to send a strong message to the DoD that Congress is serious about updating the military's sexual assault statute, and that the changes are expected to incorporate the U.S. federal code.

This legislation would help prosecutors, protect victims, and promote good order and discipline in the Armed Forces. It offers a graduated array of offenses that more precisely define nonconsensual sex crimes. The proposed provisions expand the scope of sex acts that can constitute sexual abuse. They afford increased protection for victims by emphasizing acts of the perpetrator rather than the reaction of the victim during an assault. This legislation expressly provides for cases involving voluntary and involuntary intoxication of the victim, which are common fact patterns in military sexual assault cases. Finally, it criminalizes sexual extortion and other forms of coercing sex from subordinates and fellow service men and women in a way that will help commanders to maintain good order and discipline in the armed forces.

By undertaking this critical revision to the UCMJ, we will demonstrate that the Department of Defense and Congress are committed to reducing the incidence of sexual assault within the Armed Forces, and bringing justice to the victims.